

BOOK REVIEWS

This column is conducted solely in the interests of California and Western Medicine readers. Critical comment, favorable and unfavorable, purely from the standpoint of the interests of the medical reader, will be made about books selected from the larger number acknowledged in the Books Received column. The advertising columns are open to book publishers who wish to make additional statements about their publications.

Orange County Medical History. By C. D. Ball, President Orange County Medical Society.

In writing this well-printed, beautifully bound volume, Doctor Ball has rendered a distinctive service in the history of California medicine. The chapter on the medical pioneers of Orange County is perhaps the most interesting to the general reader, but those devoted to the organization and history of the County Medical Society and the development of public health are usefully constructive. Short biographical sketches (mostly illustrated) of pioneers and living physicians add to the value of the book. Orange County Medical History establishes an excellent groundwork for the historian who must some day extend and dramatize this most interesting phase of the history of California.

Doctor Ball is to be congratulated on his research and industry, and on the success of a pioneer effort in a neglected field of medicine.

This Business of Operations. By James Radley. The Digest Publishing Company, Cincinnati.

An entertaining little story relating the experiences of a patient before, during and after an operation. This story has been better told by others, but Mr. Radley is such an enthusiastic booster of physicians, nurses, hospitals, that his message is a good one to read and perhaps pass on to selected patients.

Pediatrics. By various authors. Edited by Isaac A. Abt. Vol. VIII. Pp. 102. Illustrated. Philadelphia and London: W. B. Saunders Company, 1926.

Volume VIII of Doctor Abt's "System of Pediatrics" dealing with the diseases of the skin, ear and eye, as well as the subject of infant hospitals, medico-legal questions in the practice of pediatrics, tumors of infants and children, and parasitology in childhood, may well be ranked among the leading works in the field of pediatrics.

The book is well written, well organized, and extremely interesting. Doctor Abt has had as collaborators for this volume such men as Drs. John Dodson, Oliver Ormsby, Oscar Schultz, George Shambaugh, and Casey Wood. They have all contributed chapters dealing with their own specialty.

The chapter on skin affections of congenital origin by Dr. Clarke Finnered is especially well organized and written, as is the excellent article on animal parasites by Dr. Henry Ward.

All in all, this volume of Doctor Abt's is a valuable contribution to any medical library and will well repay anyone to read it carefully.

Plastic Surgery of the Head, Face, and Neck. By H. Lyons Hunt. Illustrated. Philadelphia and New York: Lea & Febiger, 1926.

This book is fairly comprehensive in its scope in spite of its limitation to 400 pages.

The historical review of the opening pages is an excellent account of the development of plastic surgery.

Other chapters deal with the application of modern principles of plastic surgery as related to repair of defects, especially those of the face. The author has drawn freely on methods and case illustrations of various authorities in this field, thus collecting accepted technique to a very recent date.

The brevity of the volume has, to an extent, curtailed its value, the scarcity of detail in description of technique of the operative procedures making the volume of less value to the general practitioner than to the specialist. This fault is in part offset by the pleasing and lucid style of the author, and the absence of ponderous and unnecessary reiteration.

Gout and Other Diseases of the Thyroid Gland. By Arnold S. Jackson. Pp. 401. Illustrated. New York: Paul B. Hoeber Company, 1926.

Another comprehensive and authoritative textbook on diseases of the thyroid gland has come to us from the hands of one thoroughly skilled in this more or less specialized field of medicine. This volume is all the more appreciated on account of the paucity of good works on the subject.

Jackson clearly outlines the generally accepted classification of goiter and details methods of dealing with each type. The carefully controlled method of administering iodine in the treatment of adolescent goiter and Graves disease, is worthy of close scrutiny. Equally important are his reasons for not giving iodine to patients with adenomata.

The importance of the basal metabolic rate is over-emphasized. He should have stressed the necessity of more exacting clinical study and the interpretation of these findings, for we all know how often a poorly made laboratory test has been the means of the wrong kind of treatment at a critical period in the disease.

No physician should attempt to treat disease of the

thyroid gland until he thoroughly understands the underlying gross and microscopic pathology, and in this Jackson is very clear. The cuts and descriptions of the pathology of the thyroid gland are excellent.

His preoperative preparation of the patient is to be commended, and the operative technique, as given, is worthy of intensive study. It is to be regretted that he finds it necessary to cut the ribbon muscles, because with proper skin-flap dissections, this can be eliminated. If the wound is dry after the resection of the diseased portions it is never necessary to leave a drain in the incision. Jackson sutures the platysma muscle separately, a procedure which always gives a good cosmetic result—a point not to be overlooked in any operation, especially on exposed areas of the skin where the preponderance of sex is on the female side, as it is in this group of diseases.

There is included a rather formidable list of publications given as references.

Taken as a whole the book is excellent, but offers practically nothing new in the treatment of disease of the thyroid gland to those already familiar with the subject.

The Thyroid Gland. By Charles H. Mayo and Henry W. Plummer. Pp. 83. St. Louis: C. V. Mosby Company, 1926. Price, \$1.75.

Amidst the plethora of writings that but serve to intensify the obscurity that surrounds the subject of endocrinology it is life-giving and stimulating to have the recent volume, "The Thyroid Gland," by Mayo and Plummer.

Restraint in praise of the book is almost impossible. Characterized by briefness, succinctness and clarity, the facts of the thyroid gland as medical teachers know them are set forth admirably.

Mayo's discussion of the general subject is complete and illuminating and most pertinent. Plummer follows with details eliminating the nonessential and giving us the best classification and definitions yet proposed.

His summation and expression of his experience and beliefs regarding treatment is admirable and, while brief, is far from being an "outline." He discusses methods for combined treatment and control which should be more extensively followed than they are.

There are two factors in particular which he dwells upon interestingly and with conviction, namely, that in those patients with auricular fibrillation the inhibition of digitalis vastly improves the postoperative convalescence; and his emphasis of the dual dysfunction wherein at times both iodine and thyroid must be exhibited in conjunction to produce the desired result.

Among all the books and brochures published upon this perennially fascinating condition there is none that is more informing or practical for the education and use of student, practitioner or specialist.

Fundamentals of Dermatology. By Alfred Schalek. Pp. 239. Illustrated. Philadelphia and New York: Lea & Febiger, 1926. Price, \$3.

This book of about 200 pages is admirably adapted for use by the medical student and general practitioner; the fundamentals are presented in a concise and thorough manner, and the illustrations are particularly clear.

The alphabetical arrangement of diseases which has been used here is a departure from the usual, however, the classification given immediately under each disease title is entirely adequate and perhaps less confusing to one not making a special study of dermatology.

After a year's experience as president of the Academy of Medicine of Toledo and Lucas County, Dr. Edward J. McCormick, in his presidential address recently delivered, pointed out the need for greater cooperation among physicians and the value of organization activities as a means of stemming the tide of social medicine.

"Many there are," Doctor McCormick observed, "who feel that socialized medicine is only a myth—an imaginary 'bug-a-boo'—ammunition for the pessimist and calamity orator. Those of us who have shared tents and billets with fellow medical men on the continent during the great war, or to those of us who have practiced in England—and there are several—state medicine represents a horrible aspect.

"A threat which cannot be disregarded if we, like Hippocrates, desire our skill passed on to the younger men, to our sons and future generations. English and German physicians have reached the highest peak of medical and surgical excellence. They have traveled the one road only, and today they are in great share reduced to destitution and poverty because of the inroads made by state medicine.

"Following economic and legislative catastrophe there comes to them gradually, scientific decline which will surely undo the work of centuries. I speak not in a theoretical mood, but in cold, hard reality, and only when the rank and file of physicians see and realize the situation will we be able to erect proper fortresses of protection.

"State medicine can be foisted upon the American public and it will be difficult to dislodge once it is endorsed by the hopeful but unknowing voter."—Editorial, *Ohio State M. J.*